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The Rev. Joshua Pawelek
Minister



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March 2, 2016

Members of the Public Health Committee:

I am the Rev. Josh Pawelek, minister of the Unitarian Universalist Society: East in Manchester, and a resident of Glastonbury. I am writing to express my support for Senate Bill 298, "An Act Concerning Telehealth Services for Medicaid Recipients."

As one who has worked for the past decade as a leader in Connecticut's Interfaith Fellowship for Universal Healthcare, I am convinced that the goal of providing affordable, accessible, quality health care to all Connecticut residents requires us to promote and support a wide variety of methods for delivering health care. Telehealth is yet another method that helps close the gap between access and no access to health care. Indeed, in expanding telehealth services to Medicaid recipients, SB 298 takes one more step in Connecticut's march toward health care for all.

Telehealth makes financial sense as well. In 2015 a study by the Office of Fiscal Analysis concluded that telehealth would not result in a fiscal impact to the state. Case studies cited in the report show that telehealth, to date, has led to net savings. Furthermore, empirical research has shown that healthcare provided through telehealth has saved money in travel time, wages lost and family expenses. By expanding telehealth services to the Medicaid population, the state will allow for more access to care for underserved populations who often have a difficult time finding transportation to care facilities.

Please support passage of SB 298. Please take this small but significant step towards a healthier Connecticut!

Respectfully submitted,

The Rev. Joshua Mason Pawelek

